

TALSMANDENS GRUPPE
PRECHERGRUPPE
SPOKESMAN'S GROUP
GROUPE DE PORTE-PAROLE
GRUPPO DEL PORTAVOCE
BUREAU VAN DE WOORDVOERDER

**PRESSE-MEDDELELSE
MITTEILUNG AN DIE PRESSE
PRESS-RELEASE**

**INFORMATION A LA PRESSE
INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA
MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

Brussels, 22 March 1978

OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES ON PROBLEMS ARISING OUT OF
THE TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL ACT (TSCA)¹

The Commission recently recommended that the Council open negotiations with the United States of America on the problems arising out of the US Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA).

1. Why negotiate on the TSCA?

The aim of the TSCA is to protect man and the environment from dangers due to chemical compounds.

These substances are controlled through a system of technical data sheets submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which requires chemicals' manufacturers to carry out the necessary tests; it also regulates hazardous substances and sponsors research to assess their effects.

Given the objective of protecting man and the environment, and the possible effects on trade, the importance of the TSCA is evident.

2. Aims

The aim of the negotiations is to reach agreement on how the TSCA is to be applied to products from the Community.

The negotiations will cover several areas, particularly:

- form, content and mutual recognition of the scientific and technical data sheets on dangerous substances;
- agreement on general philosophies (hazard evaluation; priorities);
- agreement on administrative, regulatory and economic procedures (accreditation of laboratories; confidentiality; cost sharing; etc.);
- investigation of possible openings for cooperation in research.

3. Community initiatives on toxic substances

Industrialized states are all establishing preventive rules to protect man and the environment from chemicals put on the market.

2.

The Community is also engaged in regulating this problem.

Its first environmental action programme goes back to 1973 (OJ C 112 of 20 December 1973) and covers improvements in and the harmonization of quantitative analysis techniques, toxicity studies and the obligation to submit samples and a description of the methods of quantitative analysis.

On 21 December 1974, the Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a directive (OJ C 260 of 5 November 1976) amending the Directive of 27 June 1967 on the approximation of the laws of the Member States relating to the classification, packaging and labelling of dangerous substances.

The second environmental action programme (OJ C 139 of 16 June 1977) reaffirms the need for careful control, at Community level, of the environmental impact of chemical compounds.

It is worth mentioning that two meetings to obtain information have already been held in October 1977 and January 1978; they were attended by representatives of the Community, the Member States, the European chemical industry, the European Environment Bureau and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The meetings provided a better understanding of the TSCA's significance - with in-depth treatment in some cases; the meeting showed that there was general agreement on the need for an early start to negotiations with the United States of America on the application of this law to products from the Community.

In preparation for the negotiations, and for their successful conduct, the Commission plans to consult with Member States' experts.